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SCRIPTURE PROOFS OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

We have just met with a pamphlet, by the Rev. Edward Murray, P.P., Kilfin, which, on the title-page, is respectfully presented to the candid judgment of the Protestant clergy. It is called the "Orthodox Sword of the Word," and purports to contain Scripture proofs of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Nothing delights us more than to find our Roman Catholic friends appealing to Scripture, and we are always happy to meet them on that ground. We, therefore, proceed to give to Mr. Murray's Scripture proofs the benefit of our circulation. We cannot afford space for the 35 pages of comment with which Mr. Murray accompanies them; but, surely, if it were the intention of the Spirit of God to declare in Scripture the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, He was able to do so in words sufficiently intelligible to a plain reader. We wonder that it escaped Mr. Murray's sagacity, when he employs twenty pages in deducing the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception from his first text, that he inevitably forces his readers to feel that an interpretation deduced

by so laborious a process cannot be the true one. His proof must be not only a proof out of Scripture, but a long way out of Scripture indeed.

Here, then, are the proofs. We give the authorized translation and the Douay:—

AUTHORIZED.	DOUAY.
1. Luke i. 35. Therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.	And, therefore, also, the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
2. St. John i. 16. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.	And of his fulness we all have received, and grace for grace.
3. Luke xi. 27. Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.	Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck.
4. Luke i. 42. Blessed is the fruit of thy womb.	Blessed is the fruit of thy womb.
5. Gen. iii. 15. I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.	I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.*
6. Prov. xxxi. 10. Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her so that he shall have no need of spoil.	Who shall find a valiant woman? jewels from the uttermost coasts is the price of her. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he shall have no need of spoils.
7. Cant. iv. 7. Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.	Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee.
8. Cant. viii. 5. I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth; there she brought thee forth that bare thee.	Under the apple tree I raised thee up; there thy mother was corrupted, there she was de-flowered that bore thee.†

We leave these texts as a puzzle for our readers; and we shall give any of them great credit for ingenuity who may succeed in finding the slightest connection between any of these texts and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. And as these, no doubt, are the *best* texts that can be had in support of the doctrine, we leave our Roman Catholic readers to judge what is the Scripture foundation on which this doctrine rests.

One word more. We think it would have been consistent in one who has pledged himself never to interpret Scripture but according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers, to name some early writers who have put the same interpretation as he has done upon the texts quoted. We are far from approving all the interpretations of Scripture we find in the works of the Fathers; many of them we make no scruple to reject; but we think, on the other hand, that it is a strong presumption against the truth of an interpretation if it is started in 1855, for the first time, nor do we think that the true sense of these passages of Scripture was left for Father Edward Murray to discover.

THE APOCRYPHA.

In our last number we were engaged with the examination of the arguments urged by Roman Catholic theologians in support of the Tridentine Decree respecting the Apocrypha. We discussed the passage quoted from Augustine, and the Decree of the Council of Carthage (on the supposition of its genuineness); and we proved, unanswerably we believe, that the word "canonical," as therein applied to the apocryphal books, is not used in the restricted sense in which we employ it—viz., as denoting inspired books—but in a wider sense, as designating writings approved by the Church, and read in her public assemblies on account of the rules (canons) of conduct which they contain, and the edifying lessons which they inculcate.

We come next to the Epistle of Pope Innocent I. to Exuperius, which professes to have been written at the commencement of the fifth century, and which enumerates some of the apocryphal books in "the Canon of the Scriptures." We have already given the weightiest reasons for concluding that this epistle is a forgery, concocted no less than four centuries after its pretended date.—See CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. ii., p. 126. But, even admitting its genuineness, the very same remark may be made upon it that we already made respecting Augustine and the Council of Carthage—viz., that the word "canon" is not used in the restricted, but in the wide sense before explained. In support of this assertion we have, as we said in the last number, Cardinal Cajetan's authority.

The next document which presents itself is the Decree of Pope Gelasius (at the end of the fifth century), which professes to have been drawn up by him together with a Roman council of seventy bishops. In this

* Note to Douay Version.—"Ipse, the woman; so divers of the Fathers read this place, conformably to the Latin (vulgate); others read it *Ipsum*—viz., the seed. The sense is the same; for it is by her seed, *Jesus Christus*, that the woman crushes the serpent's head."

† Note to Douay Version.—"That is, that Christ redeemed the Gentiles at the foot of the cross, where the synagogue of the Jews (the mother Church) was corrupted by their denying him, and crucifying him."

decree, a list—or, rather, three lists, differing more or less from each other—of the Books of the Old Testament is given, which includes the Apocrypha. We have already shown (CATHOLIC LAYMAN, vol. ii., pp. 112, 126) that the gravest doubts exist as to the genuineness of this decree, and we might, accordingly, fairly refuse to admit it as evidence. But, as in the three preceding instances, we will consent to receive it, and then set it aside by the "distinction" before made, and which Cajetan teaches us to apply to this very case.

Down to the end of the fifth century, then, the Western Church, equally with the Eastern, knew nothing of the Tridentine doctrine of the equality of the Apocrypha to the Jewish Scriptures. The words "canon" and "canonical" were, indeed, frequently applied to all, indifferently; but, then, it was only in the sense of a list or catalogue of writings, stamped with ecclesiastical authority, and read publicly in the churches. It was never intended to confound the fundamental distinction which Jerome, and Cyril of Jerusalem, and many other western and eastern Fathers expressly made between the inspired and the non-inspired books contained in the same volume—between the canonical books (strictly so called) and those which were properly designated ecclesiastical (our Apocrypha). That the Western Church did not, down to the period specified, and even for a century later, intend to confound this distinction, is proved, beyond all question, by the decisive authority of Pope Gregory the Great. This eminent pontiff, in the 19th book of his "Moralia," written at the close of the sixth century, expresses himself, in reference to the Apocrypha, in very nearly the words of Jerome (whom we, Protestants, follow). Being about to cite a passage from the 1st Book of Maccabees, Gregory introduces the quotation with the following apology:—"Concerning which matter we do not act irregularly if we bring forward a testimony from books, which, though not canonical, have yet been published for the edification of the Church." Gregory here uses the word "canonical" in its restricted sense—viz., as applied to the inspired books of the Old Testament; and, as the head and organ of the Roman Church of the sixth century, he declares that in this sense the term was not applicable nor applied to the Apocrypha.

The next authority, after the decree of Pope Gelasius, adduced by Roman Catholic divines, is a catalogue contained in the decree of Pope Eugenius IV., passed at the close, or, rather, after the close of the Council of Florence, A.D. 1439. It is, certainly, somewhat striking that this is the only synodical authority in support of their canon which Roman Catholics can even pretend to adduce during the eleven centuries and a half which elapsed between the Council of Carthage and the Council of Trent. However, the catalogue in question professes to form part of Pope Eugenius's "Instruction to the Armenians," which document Roman Catholic writers contend must be regarded as included among the acts of the Council of Florence. Now, in the first place, there are strong doubts as to the genuineness of this catalogue, and weighty reasons have been adduced to show that it is a forgery of Caranza, the epitomizer of the council. But, in the second place, even admitting its genuineness and that it did really form part of "The Instruction to the Armenians," this latter document, having been drawn up by the Pope himself, after the breaking up of the council, does not possess synodical authority, and, therefore, does not bind the Church, even on Roman principles. And, lastly, admitting it to have emanated from the council as such, yet this synod has no claim whatever to the title of a general council, even so far as regards the Western Church; for the majority of the western bishops refused to attend it, and remained at Basle. In fact, so far were they from acknowledging the authority of the Council of Florence, that they anathematized it as a *schismatical assembly* and a *synagogue of Satan*. Consequently, the Latin Church (to say nothing of the Greek, which has never, to the present hour, admitted the canonicity of the Apocrypha) never, up to the date of the Council of Trent, received the Apocrypha as of equal authority with the rest of Scripture; never, in other words, recognised it as *canonical* in the sense that we hold the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament Scriptures to be canonical.

In corroboration of our assertion that the Council of Florence was not deemed to have canonized the Apocrypha any more than the Council of Carthage or Pope Gelasius's Council had done, we can adduce the recorded opinions of some of the most eminent divines of the Latin Church, who lived in the interval between that Council of Florence and the Council of Trent, and who have most clearly distinguished between the canonical Scriptures (properly so called) and the apocryphal books; denying most emphatically that the latter are of co-ordinate authority with the former in matters of faith, and agreeing with Jerome and us (Protestants) in assigning to them the subordinate function of being *useful for edification and moral instruction*. Of these witnesses in our favour we will adduce a few as a specimen of the entire. Antoninus, who was canonized by Pope Adrian VI., and who was present at the Council of Florence, and, therefore, may be presumed to have known what that council

* De qua re non inordinate agimus si ex libris, licet non *canonicis*, sed tamen ad edificationem ecclesie editis, testimonium proferamus. Tour. I., p. 622, edit. Bened.

decreed respecting the canon of Scripture, writes thus—"The Hebrews reckon xxii books in all as authentic. They designate as apocryphal the books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and Maccabees. The Church, however, receives the *Apocrypha* also as true, useful, and moral, although not valid for proof in controversy concerning matters of faith."* More decidedly, if possible, in our favour, is the testimony of *Alphonsus Tostatus*, the contemporary of Antoninus, and who was regarded as the wonder of his age in learning of every kind. We will quote but one of the numerous passages to the same effect, which occur in his writings—"None of those apocryphal books (although it may be inserted amongst the other books of the Bible, and may be read in the Church) is of such authority as that the Church can argue from it to prove any truth; and so far forth as this she does not receive them. And in this sense Jerome is to be understood, when he says—The Church knows nothing of the Apocrypha."† We come next to *Cardinal Ximenes*, to whose piety and munificence we are indebted for one of the noblest monuments of human learning—The Complutensian Polyglott. In the preface to that work, the reader is specially informed that "the books outside the canon, which the Church receives rather for the edification of the people than to confirm the authority of ecclesiastical dogmas, are written in Greek only (not in Hebrew)."‡ These books are enumerated—viz., Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Maccabees, and the apocryphal additions to Esther and Daniel. Now, when we remember that the Complutensian Polyglott, preface and all, was published by the authority of Pope Leo X., to whom it was dedicated, we have a very striking proof that, at the commencement of the 16th century (A.D. 1517), at the very time when Luther commenced his opposition to Rome, neither the Pope nor the Church of Rome held the canonicity (in the strict sense of the word) of the Apocrypha, but regarded it in the same light as Jerome, whose very words, in reference to it, *Cardinal Ximenes* quotes in the passage above cited.

Another eminent witness on our side is the great *Erasmus*, who, in addition to his vast general learning, was the first Biblical scholar and critic of his age. In his explanation of the Apostle's Creed and the Decalogue, he proposes this very question, as to the number of Books contained in canonical Scripture, and he answers it by adducing the catalogue of *Rufinus* (of Aquileia, and a contemporary of Jerome), in which our apocryphal Books are expressly separated from the canonical, and designated by a distinct name—viz., *ecclesiastical*. Again, in his epistle to students of Scripture, prefixed to the 4th volume of his edition of Jerome's works, *Erasmus* says—"It certainly is of great moment to ascertain what the Church receives, and with what intention she does so; for, although she may attribute the same honour to the (22) Books of the Hebrews and the Gospels, she certainly does not mean that the same weight should be assigned to Judith, Tobit, and the Books of Wisdom as to the Pentateuch."§ What a striking prospective commentary on the decree of Trent, passed about sixteen years after, in which it was asserted that the Church always received the Apocrypha as of equal authority with the rest of the Bible!

Cardinal Cajetan's testimony we have already adduced in our last number. His works abound with statements of a similar kind. We will here quote two more, if possible stronger than that which has been referred to. One occurs in his commentary on the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews—"We have adopted Jerome's rule to prevent us from error in the determination of the canonical Books; for we esteem as canonical those which he delivered as such, and those which he separated from the canonical Books we hold to be outside the canon."|| The other passage is found in the Dedicatorial Epistle to Pope Clement VII., prefixed to *Cajetan's* Commentaries on the Historical Books of the Old Testament. "Most blessed father," he writes, "the universal Latin Church is most deeply indebted to St. Jerome, not only on account of his annotations on the Scriptures, but also because he distinguished the canonical books from the non-canonical, inasmuch as he thereby freed us from the reproach of the Hebrews, who otherwise might say that we were forging for ourselves books

or parts of books belonging to the ancient canon, which they never received."** *Cajetan's* work appeared but twelve years before the Council of Trent, and was dedicated, as we have just said, to Pope Clement VII., and received his approbation. Consequently, Jerome's rule, relative to the broad distinction between the canonical books (properly so called) and the apocryphal, was then recognised by the Roman Pontiff himself.

Such was the state of opinion respecting the canon of Scripture, among the greatest divines of the Western Church, and even some, at least, of the Roman Pontiffs, immediately prior to the Council of Trent. Disregarding, however, everything but the exigencies of the moment, that Council published, in 1546, its portentous decree, whereby it swept away the barrier which had existed for seventeen centuries between the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament and the Apocrypha. The one great object of the Council was, to arrest, by every possible means, the reformation movement, and to sustain, by every available expedient, the corruptions in the doctrines and practices of the Western Church, which had been for many ages making silent but sure progress. The Reformers appealed to Scripture, and to it alone, as the arbiter of the points of dispute between them and the Church of Rome. The Tridentine Fathers, while they refused, and for a very plain reason, to rest everything on the decision of Scripture, alleging, as a co-ordinate authority, the traditions of the Church, yet were naturally anxious to have Scripture on their side as far as possible. With this view they enlarged the limits of canonical or inspired Scripture, admitting within its sacred pale the apocryphal writings, because from them they thought they might derive what they searched the canonical Scriptures for in vain—viz., some show of proof in support of such dogmas as purgatory, the worship of angels, and the atoning efficacy of alms-deeds.

The history of the manner in which the Tridentine decree in question was passed is highly instructive. In the "Congregations," or preliminary meetings, held prior to the fourth Session the question of the Canon of Holy Scripture was debated. Some of the divines recommended that the distinction made by Jerome, and approved by Pope Gregory, between the canonical and non-canonical books of the Old Testament, should be still maintained. Others were of opinion, that no distinction should be expressly stated, but that a general catalogue should be drawn out of all the books together, like that of the Council of Carthage, and nothing more said on the subject. Others, again, suggested that a threefold division should be made, the third class being composed of the books that had never been received as inspired by the Church—viz., the Apocrypha. A fourth party, the smallest in point of number, but the most zealous and energetic, proposed that the Apocrypha should be placed upon the same footing as the rest of Scripture, and an anathema pronounced against all who should dispute it. This opinion at last prevailed, and the famous Decree de *Canonicis Scripturis* was passed, in the fourth session, by some fifty bishops, of whom sixteen, at least, utterly dissented from it in reality, and merely acquiesced in the opinion of the majority. Such is the way in which this awful decree was passed, and such is the authority on which it rests. Fifty-three bishops, or rather thirty-seven, with a specific object in view, to the attainment of which they felt themselves constrained to make any sacrifices, assumed the privilege of raising to the rank of inspired Scripture books which hitherto had not only not been admitted within the sacred pale, but had been expressly excluded from it by many of the greatest Fathers and Doctors of the Church.†

We have, then, on the one side, this decree, passed by the men, and in the manner just described. We have, upon the other side, the authority of our Blessed Lord and his inspired apostles; we have the undisputed authority of the Church of God, Jewish and Christian, during a period of seventeen centuries; we have the deliberate opinions of the greatest Fathers and Doctors down to the very time when the Council of Trent was assembled; we have all the reformed Churches of Western Christendom, and the whole orthodox Eastern Church from the remotest times to the present hour. We are willing to take our stand upon this side; we accept, as regards the Old Testament, the canon of the Jews, notwithstanding the contemptuous epithet of "the canon of the Scribes and Pharisees," with which some of our

opponents, with more zeal than reverence, have stigmatized it. The idle taunt, that this is a Jewish, not a Christian canon, the Protestant can easily afford to disregard, when he bears in mind that an inspired apostle has expressly enumerated it amongst the privileges of the Jews, that "to them were committed the oracles of God;" and when he further recollects that two of the greatest Fathers of the Christian Church deemed it no disgrace to Christianity to be indebted for the Old Testament to the Jews. "The Church," says Jerome, "knows nothing of the Apocrypha; recourse must be had to the Hebrew books, from which the Lord speaks, and out of which the disciples take their examples."‡ "The Jews," says Augustine, "carry the volume on which the Christian faith is built; they have been constituted our librarians."† And as to the anathema with which the Fathers of Trent have thought fit to sanction their decree, we console ourselves with the assurance of the inspired sage—"The curse causeless shall not come."

Correspondence.

HOW MUCH IS YOUR SOUL WORTH?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—Jerry Donovan, and myself, and a lot of the neighbours went down to old Ned Bryan's, the other day, to see his boy, who's just come home from California, with a mint of money; for though Ned is a Protestant, still he's a very decent man, and we were all glad to hear of his luck; and while he was telling us all that he seen in his travels, and how the lumps of gold were as thick in the ground as the praties used to be in the old times, who should come in but the minister himself. "God save all here," says he. "God save your reverence," says we. "Well, Ned," says he, "I'm glad to hear that your son has come back to you, and has brought something with him." "Thanks be to God," says Ned, "he has come back safe and sound, and brought enough with him to stock a farm; and I'm telling him that he must be careful not to lose what he has got; for if once he lost it, he'd find it hard to get it back again." "True for you," says the minister; "and," says he, "Ned, that's a hint we should all take; we should all look sharp after the treasure God has given us; for if once it's lost, it's lost for ever." "Why, then, your reverence," says I, "there's some of us that won't have much trouble in looking after our treasure; for," says I, "we haven't arty to look after." "Deed, then, you have," says he; "poor as you are, you have each a great treasure that's well worth looking after." "What can it be at all?" says the boys; "sure we haven't amongst us what would buy a fat pig." "Still, for all," says the minister, "it's truth I'm telling you, when I say that each one of you, Protestant and Roman Catholic, possesses a treasure that's worth more than all the gold young Ned brought home with him; for," says he, "boys, each one of you has an immortal soul that's worth more than all the gold in California;" and with that, he took down Ned Bryan's big Bible that was on the shelf, and read out for us a verse which said that "it would be no profit to a man if he gained the whole world and lost his soul." Well, the boys began to look at each other, and, says Mick Flynn, "he's going to attack our holy religion out of the Protestant Bible." "And," says Jerry, "that's the Protestant Bible, sir, and sure we don't care for a word that's in it;" and, says another of the boys, "didn't Father John tell us it was the devil's book?" "and," says another, "sure 'twas made by Luther and Henry VIII." "Easy, boys," says the minister, "don't get into a passion; and," says he, "is the Douay Bible the devil's book?" "No," says Mick Flynn, "that's the real sort, that's the genuine article." "And," says the minister again, "was it made by Luther, or Henry VIII.?" "No," says Jerry, "they had no call to it, and we'll believe anything that's in it." "Very good," says the parson, "that's all I want;" and with that, he put his hand into his pocket, and pulled out a real Douay Bible. "Now, boys," says he, "is that your own Bible?" So Jerry, and some of those who were knowledgeable about such things, allowed that it was our own Bible. So the parson handed it to Jerry, and, says he, "find out the Gospel of St. Mark, viii. chap., 36th verse. Well, Jerry looked very foolish, and twisted and turned it, hither and over, but all to no purpose; so he handed it to Mick Flynn, but Mick passed it on to the next, and, at last, it came round to me; but the never a one of us could find out the place. So the parson began to laugh, and, says he, "boys, I think you know as little about your own Bible as about ours." So he found out the place himself, and gave it to Jerry, and, says he, "I'll read first out of the Protestant Bible, and then do you read out of your own Bible." So with that, he read, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Then Jerry read out of the Douay Bible, "For what shall it

* S. Antonin. Sum. Hist., part. i. Tit., 3. c. vi. "In totum xxii. pontum Hebraei Libros authenticos. Apocrypha appellunt librum Sapientiam, &c. Ecclesia tamen etiam Apocrypha recipit ut vera, utilia, et moralia, etiam in contentione eorum quae sunt fidei non urgentia ad arguendum."

† Tostatus in enarr. praefat. in Lib. Paralip. q. 7. "Nullus tamen istorum librorum apocryphorum (etiam si sit scriptum inter alios libros Bibl. et legatur in ecclesia), tantae auctoritatis est ut ex eo ecclesia arguat ad probandum aliquam veritatem; et quantum ad hoc non recipit eos. Et de hoc intelligitur quod dicit hic Hieronymus—scilicet Apocrypha nescit ecclesia."

‡ Fr. Ximenes Praef. ad Lect. "At vero libri extra canonem, quos ecclesia potius ad edificationem populi quam ad auctoritatem ecclesiasticorum dogmatum confirmandam recipit, Graecam tantum scripturam habent."

§ Erasmus Epist. ad divin. liter. stud., Tom. iv., oper. Hier. "Magis certe refert, quid quo animo comprobant ecclesia. Ut enim parem tribuat auctoritatem II. breviorum voluminibus et quatuor Evangelis, certe non vult idem esse pondus Judith, Tobiae, et Sapientiae libris, quod Moesis Pentateuchus."

|| Cajetani comment. in 1. cap. Ep. ad Heb. "Hieronymi sortiti sumus regulam, ne erremus in discretionem librorum canonicorum; nam quos ille canonicos tradidit, canonicos habemus; et quos ille a canonicis discrevit extra canonem habemus."

* Cajetani Ep. dedic. ad P. Clem. VII., ante comm. in Lib. Hist. V. T. "S. Hieronymus, Pater hostiasimo, universa ecclesia Latina plurimum debet, non solum ob annotationes Scripturas, sed etiam propter discretos ab eodem Libros canonicos a non canonicis. Liberavit siquidem nos ab Hebraeorum opprobrio, quod fingamus nobis antiqui canonis libros aut librorum partes, quibus ipsi penitus carent."

† Roman Catholic cont. oversial writers, we may observe, usually divide all the books of the Bible into two classes—which they term respectively the *Proto-canonical* and the *Dutero-canonical*. The first class comprises the 22 Jewish books of the Old Testament, and the entire of the New, with the exception of the seven epistles, whose canonical authority was not universally established so soon as that of the rest. The second class embraces the seven apocryphal books and parts of books of the Old Testament, and the as-read seven epistles of the New. By this classification, a twofold advantage is secured—first, by admitting a quasi-distinction between the Apocrypha and the Jewish Scriptures less violence seems to be done to antiquity; and, secondly, by placing the Apocrypha in the same category as the said seven epistles, of whose inspired authority the Church at large never entertained any doubt, an argument is tacitly insinuated for the inspiration of the former.

* Hieron. Praef. in Paralipom. "Apocrypha nescit ecclesia. Ad Hebraeos revertendum est, unde et Dominus loquitur, ut discipuli exempla praesumant."

† August. in Psalm lvi., § 9. "Codiceum portat Judaeus unde credit Christianus. Librarii nostri facti sunt."